

REMARKS/ARGUMENT**I. General Remarks and Disposition of the Claims**

Claims 1-87 are pending. Claims 1-87 are subject to a restriction requirement and/or an election requirement. Claims 60-87 have been cancelled herein in response to the restriction requirement. Applicants respectfully request that the above amendments be entered and further request reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments and the remarks contained herein.

II. Remarks Regarding the Restriction Requirement

In the Office Action, the Examiner issued a restriction requirement under 35 U.S.C. § 121. (Office Action at 2.) In response to this restriction requirement, Applicants elect for examination on the merits claims 1-59. Applicants have cancelled claims 60-87 herein in response to the restriction requirement. Applicants reserve the right to take up prosecution on claims 60-87 in an appropriate continuation, continuation-in-part, or divisional application.

III. Remarks Regarding Species Election Requirement**A. Species Election Regarding The Internal Fluid**

In the Office Action, the Examiner has required a species election under 35 U.S.C. § 121. (Office Action at 2.) With respect to this election requirement, the Examiner stated that “[c]laims 22 and 72 are generic to the following disclosed patentably distinct species: the internal fluid.” (Office Action at 2.)

Accordingly, Applicants hereby elect air as the internal fluid in claim 22, if no generic claim is found allowable. In accordance with this election requirement, Applicants identify claim 22 as falling within this elected species. Applicants reserve their right to pursue additional species should a generic be allowed, or in a divisional or other continuing application.

B. Species Election Regarding Coated and Uncoated Elastic Particles

In the Office Action, the Examiner has required a species election under 35 U.S.C. § 121. (Office Action at 3.) With respect to this election requirement, the Examiner stated that “[t]his application contains claims directed to the following disclosed patentably distinct species: coated or uncoated elastic particles.” (Office Action at 3.)

Accordingly, Applicants hereby elect coated elastic particles for prosecution, if no generic claim is found allowable. Currently, claims 1, 44, and 47 are generic. Applicants

reserve their right to pursue additional species should a generic be allowed, or in a divisional or other continuing application.

C. Species Election Regarding Hydrophobic and Hydrophilic Coating Material

In the Office Action, the Examiner has required a species election under 35 U.S.C. § 121. (Office Action at 4.) With respect to this election requirement, the Examiner stated that “[s]hould applicant elect to proceed with the species of coated particles, claims 31 and 81 are generic to the following disclosed patentably distinct species: a hydrophobic or hydrophilic coating material.” (Office Action at 4.)

Accordingly, Applicants hereby elect the hydrophobic coating material in claim 31, if no generic claim is found allowable. In accordance with this election requirement, Applicants identify claims 31 and 32 as falling within this elected species. Applicants reserve their right to pursue additional species should a generic be allowed, or in a divisional or other continuing application.

D. Species Election Regarding Hydrophobic Coating Material

In the Office Action, the Examiner has required a species election under 35 U.S.C. § 121. (Office Action at 4-5.) With respect to this election requirement, the Examiner stated that “[s]hould applicant elect to proceed with the species of hydrophobically coated particles, claims 32 and 82 are generic to the following disclosed patentably distinct species: a hydrophobic coating material.” (Office Action at 4-5.)

Accordingly, Applicants hereby elect silanes as the hydrophobic coating material in claim 32, if no generic claim is found allowable. In accordance with this election requirement, Applicants identify claim 32 as falling within this elected species. Applicants reserve their right to pursue additional species should a generic be allowed, or in a divisional or other continuing application.

SUMMARY AND PETITION FOR ONE MONTH TIME EXTENSION

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections. Applicants further submit that the application is now in condition for allowance, and earnestly solicit timely notice of the same. Should the Examiner have any questions, comments or suggestions in furtherance of the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the attorney of record by telephone, facsimile, or electronic mail.

Applicants hereby petition for a one-month time extension under 1.136(a) up to and including May 12, 2006. Enclosed is Check No. 964348 in the amount of \$120.00 for a one-month time extension under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(a)(1) and § 1.136(a)

Should the Commissioner deem that any additional fees are due, including any fees for extensions of time, the Commissioner is authorized to debit Baker Botts L.L.P.'s Deposit Account No. 02-0383, Order Number 063718.0161, for any underpayment of fees that may be due in association with this filing.

The practitioner, named below, is authorized to file correspondence in the above-identified application pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.34(a).

Respectfully submitted,

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